



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2019-2020

LFIR#: 2069

1. Title of Project: Employee Certification and Retention

2. Senate Sponsor: Gayle Harrell

3. Date of Submission: 02/27/2019

4. Project/Program Description:

The Guardian ad Litem Program (GAL) is requesting \$658,172 in General Revenue funding, of which \$358,830 is recurring and \$299,342 is non-recurring, to train and certify 380 professional child advocate managers of the GAL Program. This issue includes the establishment of three (3) FTE Regional Program Directors to implement and direct a statewide training program. By implementing a program of professional certification, akin to that required of DCF and Community Based Care employees, the GAL Program will attract and retain qualified and capable child advocate managers and improve outcomes for children within the child-welfare system. Certification brings with it a uniform set of quality and ethical standards, enhanced training, competency testing, professional development on child welfare issues, as well as volunteer management, childhood trauma, brain development, advocacy and improved recruitment and retention.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds : Justice Administration

State Agency Contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	658,172
Fixed Capital Outlay	
Total State Funds Requested	658,172

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percent
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	658,172	100.00%
Federal	0	0.00%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0.00%
Local	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2019-2020	658,172	100.0%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	NonRecurring		

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested? Yes



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a. If yes, indicate non-recurring amount per year. 0

10. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		
Other Salary and Benefits		
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		
Operational Costs:		
Salary and Benefits	Recurring salary and benefit costs for three (3) regional program director positions	212,832
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Increase contracted services budget by \$445,340 to cover the costs of the certification program. Recurring = \$145,998 and non-recurring = \$299,342.	445,340
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		658,172

11. Program Performance:

a. **What is the specific purpose or goal that will be achieved by the funds requested?**

Certification brings with it a uniform set of quality and ethical standards, enhanced training, competency testing, professional development on child welfare issues as well as volunteer management, childhood trauma, brain development, advocacy and improved recruitment and retention. Certification will level the expertise and training of the child advocate managers. The result (goal) is better and more effective advocacy in the courtroom and the community for abused and neglected children represented by the GAL child advocate managers.

b. **What are the activities and services that will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?**

The costs of this request include initial certification fees for professional child advocate managers, recertification on a recurring basis, testing and certification of new employees, salaries and benefits for three regional program director positions, expense costs for travel and supplies, the non-recurring cost of curriculum development, and recurring costs to update and upgrade the professional pre-service training for these employees.

c. **What are the direct services to be provided to citizens by the appropriations project?**



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The Guardian ad Litem Program is the independent voice for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the dependency system. When children are removed, the Guardians ad Litem are the voice in the absence of the parent. Guardians ad Litem investigate and report to the court on the best interests of the child - affecting placements, schooling, reunification with parents and siblings, education, and other key life events. GAL volunteers often become mentors to the children they represent, maintaining a relationship into adulthood and beyond.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

The target population is the child advocate manager staff of the Florida Guardian ad Litem Program. There are approximately 380 employees in this class at any one time.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

GALs are respected professionals in the eyes of the court, and are often the source to whom judges turn for life-altering decisions on behalf of traumatized children. By implementing a program of professional certification, akin to that required of DCF and Community Based Care employees, the GAL Program will attract and retain qualified and capable child advocate managers and improve outcomes for children within the child-welfare system. Through certification, child advocate managers will be better able to recruit and retain volunteers, provide enhanced advocacy to children they represent, and further the Program's mission to provide a guardian ad litem to every child in the dependency court. Outcome Measure: # certified

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?

The penalties outlined in the executed contract.

12. The owner(s) of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owner(s) of the facility and the entity.

None

13. Requestor Contact Information:

- a. **Name:** Neal McGarry
- b. **Organization:** Florida Certification Board
- c. **E-mail Address:** namcgarry@flcertificationboard.org
- d. **Phone Number:** (850)222-6314

14. Recipient Contact Information:

- a. **Organization:** Florida Guardian ad Litem Office
- b. **County:** Statewide
- c. **Organization Type:**
 - For Profit
 - Non Profit 501(c) (3)
 - Non Profit 501(c) (4)
 - Local Entity



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- University or College
- Other (Please specify) State agency

- d. Contact Name:** Alan Abramowitz
- e. E-mail Address:** Alan.Abramowitz@gal.fl.gov
- f. Phone Number:** (850)922-7213

15. Lobbyist Contact Information

- a. Name:** Albert Balido
- b. Firm Name:** Anfield
- c. E-mail Address:** albert@anfieldflorida.com
- d. Phone Number:** (850)251-3440